

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE STATE ENGINEER COLLABORATE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES TO DEVELOP CRITERIA FOR WATER SYSTEM PLANNING, PERFORMANCE AND CONSERVATION AS A CONDITION OF STATE FINANCING.

WHEREAS, there are six hundred fifty public water systems and seven hundred private water systems in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, ninety-five percent of these systems serve fewer than five hundred customers; and

WHEREAS, most of these systems are aging, have limited capacity, have difficulty complying with federal clean water policies, lack adequate water rights, experience continuing management and technical problems, have an inadequate financial base and lack professional planning; and

WHEREAS, financing capacity for construction, operation and maintenance of these systems is a perennial problem that regionalization or clustering of water system services could help address by increasing the customer and revenue base and exploiting economies of scale; and

WHEREAS, estimates of the cost of meeting New Mexico's water system needs go as high as five billion dollars (\$5,000,000,000) over the next twenty years; and

WHEREAS, our congressional delegation tells us not to

expect the kind of subsidies from congress that we have become used to, and the state legislature has yet to solve the riddle of how to finance these huge demands; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that available money for water system services be spent efficiently and effectively and in compliance with state and federal water law; and

WHEREAS, the effective expenditure of public funds and the successful provision of water services depend upon professional engineering, strategic planning and political fairness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state engineer be requested to collaborate with the department of environment and other agencies to develop criteria for water system planning, performance and conservation as a condition of state financing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state engineer report all findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative committee by December 1, 2005; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the state engineer, the governor and the secretary of environment.